



## Legislative Council Staff

*Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature*

Room 029 State Capitol, Denver, CO 80203-1784

Phone: (303) 866-3521 • Fax: (303) 866-3855

[lcs.ga@state.co.us](mailto:lcs.ga@state.co.us) • [leg.colorado.gov/lcs](http://leg.colorado.gov/lcs)

## Memorandum

August 11, 2021

TO: Members of the Water Resources Review Committee

FROM: Max Nardo, Fiscal Analyst, 303-866-4776  
Alexa Kelly, Research Analyst, 303-866-3469  
Josh Abram, Principal Fiscal Analyst, 303-866-3561

SUBJECT: Overview of the Water Resources Review Committee

### Summary

This memorandum describes the Water Resources Review Committee's membership, charge, meeting schedule, bill limits, and bill deadlines. It also summarizes the committee's activities over the last five years, including meetings, tours, and legislative recommendations. Final reports, memoranda, and other information from previous years are available on the General Assembly's website at: <http://leg.colorado.gov>.

### 2021 Water Resources Review Committee

Senator Kerry Donovan, Chair	Representative Barbara McLachlan, Vice-Chair
Senator Jeff Bridges	Representative Marc Catlin
Senator Don Coram	Representative Karen McCormick
Senator Sonya Jaquez Lewis	Representative Hugh McKean
Senator Jerry Sonnenberg	Representative Dylan Roberts

***Committee membership requirements.*** The Water Resources Review Committee (WRRRC) is a ten-member committee with terms extending from January 1 of an odd-numbered year to December 31 of the following even-numbered year (two years).<sup>1</sup> During odd-numbered years, the Senate President appoints the chair, and the House Speaker appoints the vice-chair. During even-numbered years, the House Speaker appoints the chair, and the Senate President appoints the vice-chair. Members are appointed according to the following criteria:

<sup>1</sup>Section 37-98-102 (2), C.R.S.

- five Senate members, three appointed by the Senate President and two appointed by the Senate Minority Leader;
- five House members appointed by the House Speaker in consultation with the House Minority Leader;
- at least four of the ten members must reside west of the Continental Divide or represent a district in which the majority of the population resides west of the Continental Divide; and
- members, to the extent possible, must be selected to achieve representation from each of the seven water divisions.

***Committee charge.*** The committee is authorized to review water issues and propose legislation related to the conservation, use, development, and financing of Colorado's water resources. In conducting its review, the committee is required to consult with experts in the field of water conservation, quality, use, finance, and development. Pursuant to Senate Bill 14-115, the WRRC is also required to review statewide planning for water resources. This law declares that the primary purpose of a state water plan is to determine state policy regarding the optimal conservation and development of Colorado's water resources. The General Assembly is deemed to be primarily responsible for guiding the development of state water policy. It also declares that this law is necessary to protect the interests of the public in the state's water resources and that the General Assembly intends to engage the people of the state in a public dialogue regarding optimal state water policy. The law affirms the legislature's delegation of policy-making authority to the Colorado Water Conservation Board and declares that the law seeks to promote the policies, processes, basin roundtable plans, and Interbasin Compact negotiations conducted pursuant to the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act and the Interbasin Compact Charter.

***Meetings and field trips.*** The committee is authorized to meet up to eight times during odd-numbered years and to take up to two field trips. Table 1 identifies the meetings and field trips that have been selected by the chair of the WRRC. Agendas for committee meetings will be posted on the committee's website: <http://leg.colorado.gov/committees/water-resources-review-committee/2021-regular-session>

**Table 1**  
**2021 Interim Water Resources Review Committee Meetings and Field Trips**

Regular Committee Meetings*		
Date	Location	Time
Wednesday, August 25	Water Congress, Steamboat Springs	2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, September 14	State Capitol Building – room TBD	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, October 27	State Capitol Building – room TBD	10:00 a.m.

  

2021 Committee Field Trips*	
Date	Location
Tuesday, August 24 to Thursday, August 26	Colorado Water Congress Summer Conference (Steamboat Springs)

\*The committee may meet up to five additional times and have one additional field trip in 2021 at the discretion of the Chair. (Committee can meet up to 8 times and have 2 field trips during odd numbered years)

## Committee Recommendations to Legislative Council

**Bill limits.** Each bill recommended by the committee must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the committee members, or at least seven members. The committee is limited to recommending three bills to the Legislative Council, unless two-thirds of the Water Resources Review Committee members vote to recommend a greater number. Such greater number may not exceed one bill or other measure per member, or up to ten bills and resolutions.

**Legislative Council review of committee recommendations.** In odd-numbered years, the Legislative Council must review interim committee recommendations by November 15. Bills approved by the Legislative Council do not count against a member's five-bill limit for the regular legislative session. Bills not approved by Legislative Council may be introduced in the regular session, but such bills will count against a member's five-bill limit. Interim committee bills must have prime sponsors prior to consideration by the Legislative Council.

**Requirements for bill drafts.** The Executive Committee of the Legislative Council's guidelines for interim committees require that at least a majority of the committee membership approve a bill in concept prior to requesting a bill draft. Requests for draft bills must occur during a single committee meeting set for requesting legislation. Bill requests must be made at least 42 days before the final meeting to allow sufficient time for drafting, the preparation of a fiscal note, and final consideration by the committee. Committee members must make drafting information available at the meeting at which the members request bills or must submit such information to the bill drafter *within three calendar days after the meeting*. Failure to submit the drafting information prior to the deadline will be deemed as a withdrawal of the bill request.

*Prior activities of the Water Resources Review Committee.* The WRRC has recommended 56 bills since it was created in 2001. 45 of these bills have become law, and 11 bills have been postponed indefinitely or deemed lost. The committee has also recommended 7 joint resolutions and 4 joint memorials, and drafted 11 letters to state and federal policymakers. The committee has conducted 27 tours, covering all of Colorado's major river basins. Table 2 provides additional information about the committee's activities over the past five years. Note that due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the committee did not meet in 2020.

**Table 2**  
**Recent Activities of the Water Resources Review Committee**

Year	Number of Meetings	Tour(s)	Recommendation(s)
2019	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-day tour in the South Platte Basin with Water Education Colorado</li> <li>• Attended Colorado Water Congress summer conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senate Bill 20-024, Require Public Input On Water Demand Management Program- <i>postponed indefinitely</i></li> <li>• House Bill 20-1072, Study Emerging Technologies For Water Management- <i>postponed indefinitely</i></li> <li>• House Bill 20-1069, Add Water Well Inspectors Identify High-risk Wells- <i>lost</i></li> <li>• Senate Bill 20-048, Study Strengthening Water Anti-speculation Law- <i>signed into law</i></li> </ul>
2018	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-day tour in the Rio Grande Basin with Water Education Colorado</li> <li>• Attended Colorado Water Congress summer conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House Bill 19-1029, Republican River Water Conservation District – <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• Senate Bill 19-016, Severance Tax Operational Fund Distribution Methodology – <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• Senate Joint Memorial 19-001, Memorial for Arkansas Valley Conduit – <i>adopted</i></li> <li>• Senate Joint Memorial 19-002, Corps of Engineers to Dredge Lower Arkansas River– <i>adopted</i></li> </ul>
2017	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-day tour in the San Miguel and Dolores Basins with the Colorado Foundation for Water Education</li> <li>• Attended Colorado Water Congress summer conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House Bill 18-1008, Mussel-free Colorado Act – <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• House Bill 18-1053, Reclaimed Water Use for Marijuana Cultivation – <i>postponed indefinitely</i></li> <li>• House Bill 18-1069, Reclaimed Water Use for Toilet Flushing – <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• House Bill 18-1093, Reclaimed Water Use for Edible Crops – <i>became law without Governor's signature</i></li> <li>• Senate Bill 18-019, Expanded Duration for CWRPDA Revolving Loans – <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• Senate Bill 18-038, Reclaimed Water Use on Industrial Hemp – <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• Senate Bill 18-041, Authorize Water Use Incidental Sand and Gravel – <i>signed into law</i></li> </ul>

**Table 2 (Cont.)**  
**Recent Activities of the Water Resources Review Committee**

Year	Number of Meetings	Tour(s)	Recommendation(s)
2016	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-day tour in the Gunnison Basin with the Colorado Foundation for Water Education</li> <li>• Attended Gunnison Water Workshop at Western State Colorado University</li> <li>• Attended Colorado Water Congress summer conference</li> <li>• 2-day tour in the Lower Arkansas River Basin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House Bill 17-1008, Graywater Regulation Exemption For Scientific Research — <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• House Bill 17-1030, Update 1921 Irrigation District Law — <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• House Bill 17-1033, Colorado Water Conservation Board Grants Loans Dredge South Platte Basin Reservoirs — <i>postponed indefinitely</i></li> <li>• Senate Bill 17-026, State Engineer Statutes Cleanup — <i>signed into law</i></li> <li>• House Joint Resolution 17-1004, Funding Prevent Aquatic Nuisance Species — <i>adopted</i></li> </ul>

Source: Legislative Council Staff.